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INFO RUEHKK/ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/WHITE HOUSE NSC PRIORITY

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SIPDIS

NEA FOR FRONT OFFICE AND IPA, NSC FOR ABRAMS/PASCUAL/SINGH

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TAGS: [KWBG](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [IS](#) [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#)

SUBJECT: PALESTINIAN ICONS: MOST PROMINENT IMAGES/FIGURES
ASSOCIATED WITH PRISONER EXCHANGE COMMEMORATIONS

¶1. (SBU) Summary. The most prominent images that West Bank Palestinians displayed in prisoner exchange rallies and celebrations in Ramallah on July 16 were of Dalal al-Mughrabi (female terrorist who hijacked an Israeli bus in 1978), freed PLF terrorist Samir Quntar, Yasir Arafat and Hizbullah leader Hasan Nasrallah. Palestinian dailies and rally participants carried few images of PA President Mahmud Abbas (Abu Mazen) or jailed Fatah leader Marwan Barghuthi. End summary.

Ramallah Fatah Rally Plays Up
Arafat/al-Mughrabi, Not PA Leaders

¶2. (SBU) Posters with dual images of Arafat and al-Mughrabi dominated the July 16 Ramallah rally attended by 1200 Palestinians and centered at Manara Square and Arafat's mausoleum. Some Quntar and Nasrallah images were also posted at the rally site. Quntar was celebrated for his political identity as a Palestinian fighter and prisoner and his Lebanese ethnic origins downplayed. There were few if any pictures of President Abbas. The rally, planned by Fatah's Mobilization Committee (dominated by Fatah Central Committee (FCC) members Ahmad Quraya' and Hakam Bala'wi), lacked any images of or references to jailed Fatah leader Marwan Barghuthi, who is regarded as a central threat to FCC members' power, even from prison.

Media Commentaries, Contacts Credit
Hizbullah, Ignore PA/Fatah Leadership

¶3. (SBU) Palestinian press commentators uniformly credited Hizbullah for the prisoner release, and did not ascribe any meaningful role to the PA or Fatah in achieving return of the remains of Palestinian militants to Lebanon. Palestinian dailies commented that the deal with Hizbullah broke the Israeli taboo on releasing prisoners "with blood on their hands," set an important precedent for future deals to release Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails, and demonstrated that the use of force and kidnapping is the most effective way to secure prisoner releases.

LAPENN